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that if France were backed by the tremendous pecuniary resources of Great Britain the Germans would be ultimately forced to evacuate French soil, but England would naturally like to avoid the drain which a long Continental war would impose upon her treasury.

It is most improbable that Germany would attempt an invasion of France if the present conflict in the Far East were over and if Russia retained something like her former military strength. That strength is now represented mainly by the army under General LINIEVITCH, Can England, as a friend of France and as a Power dreading the consequences of German aggrandizement, wish to see the annihilation of that army? So long as that force, now computed at from four hundred to five hundred thousand disciplined troops, remains intact it not only is a weighty factor in Manchuria, but might materially contribute to maintain the balance of power in Europe.

If nearly all of that great force could be brought back to the position which much of it formerly occupied—the line of the Vistula—it might exercise a wholesome restraining influence on the impulsive and ambitious of the Emperor WILLIAM II. Such an event could not fail to exercise a reassuring and steadying influence on the money markets of the world.

An intimate friendship between Great Britain and Japan in Asia would be in no wise inconsistent with the formation of similar ties between England and Russia in Europe. It is true that Russia, permanently barred from access to, an ice free port on the Pacific or the Indian Ocean, would seek an outlet in the Mediterranean. Such an outlet it would be no longer inexpedient for England to concede. Firmly established in possession of Egypt and the Suez Canal, and having ceased to fear Russian encroachment upon British India, England no longer has her former ground for opposing Russia's occupation of Constantinople. As it happens, England, and England alone, through her unapproachable sea power, could enable Russia to grasp the prize which she has coveted for centuries. At any hour a British fleet might open the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus and welcome the successor of Peter the Great to the Mosque, then destined to become once more the Church of St. Sophia. Unquestionably, the displacement of the crescent by the Russian cross in the city of Constantinople would put an end to the German dream of preponderance in Anatolia and Mesopotamia, but of late years the British people have thoroughly awakened to the fact that it is not the Muscovite but the German whom they have to fear in Europe.

**The Purpose of the Isthmian Canal.**

In a letter printed elsewhere a correspondent takes us to task in the matter of our recent comment on the article on Panama in the *Bookkeepers Magazine*, written by Mr. HAROLD BOLCE. He charges us with having read the article carelessly, and intimates injustice to Mr. BOLCE in our statement that his view of the canal question is a narrow one.

A review of the article in question confirms our earlier opinion that its consideration of the canal question was confined almost exclusively to the value of the ditch as a factor in the trade of this country with the west coast of South America. Our correspondent says that he and "many other constant readers of THE SUN would be keenly interested to know what additional ends THE SUN thinks will be served" by the construction of the canal. Mr. BOLCE argues that even if South America were reversed so that the larger trade and trade area were on the west instead of on the east coast, the cutting of the canal would not be warranted by present trade conditions.

We have always supposed, and we still suppose, that the trade of South America, whether on the eastern coast or on the western coast, to which Mr. BOLCE gives such special prominence in his article, is no more than an incident in the Isthmian canal project. We have supposed that the project involved certain questions in naval strategy, and that the canal would open a new and important highway to our own Pacific coast, to Australia, China and Japan, as well as to the west coast of South America. Unless we are grossly in error, the primary and major purpose of the Isthmian canal is the opening of a shorter and less expensive trade route to a large part of that great Far East where lies, so we are told, the great market of the future.

Presumably the trade of the teeming millions of that area, rather than the trade of the single million or so of residents on the west coast of South America, is the great object in the digging of the canal. Any view in which the horizon is bounded by that coast or its trade, or in which all except that area is dim and obscure, seems to us "narrow" and inadequate.

Replying to our correspondent's questions regarding the Tehuantepec route, we are unable at this moment to give him the date of the award of the contract to Messrs. S. WESTMAN PEARSON & CO., the English contractors, for the completion of the line and for the harbor works at its terminals. The route has been for a number of years a favorite project of President DIAZ. We believe that the Pearson contract for the line and the harbor works called for about \$40,000,000. The road, well built and equipped, is practically completed, and the harbor works soon will be. The efficiency of its operation and its place as a factor in interoceanic traffic have not yet been determined.

We do not know, but we presume that the Vera Cruz-Pacific route project, as an interoceanic route, has been abandoned in favor of the shorter and cheaper Tehuantepec line. By a line running from Cordoba, on the Vera Cruz-Pacific, to Santa Lucrécia, where it joins the Tehuantepec, connection is now made between Vera Cruz and Salina Cruz, on the Pacific, by a route little, if any, longer than would be an air line between Vera Cruz and Acapulco, although much longer than the main Tehuantepec line. Before many years a line from Mexico City, now connected with Vera

Cruz, will run via Queretaro, Guadalupe, Zapotlan and Colima, reaching the Pacific at Manzanillo. This, because of its length and the nature of the country traversed by it, will cut little or no figure in interoceanic trade.

At some time in the not distant future there will be other interoceanic rail lines in that neighborhood, but the line from Coahuila to Salina Cruz will be the most northerly which can be counted as a factor in interoceanic trade. Guatemala will complete her line and Nicaragua and Costa Rica will complete theirs. But these will be built chiefly in the interest of local traffic and as measures of political expediency. All four of these routes may and probably will play their little part in competition with the canal route for the transportation of merchandise from our Eastern cities and from Europe. But the destination of the greater part of that merchandise will lie northward and westward, and not, as Mr. BOLCE apparently believes, southward to the west coast of our companion continent. As we said in our earlier comment, "If the acquisition of the west coast trade were the only or even the main object or an item of any special importance in the construction of the canal, the work would be a gigantic folly."

Mr. BOLCE certainly confined his argument against the future utility and value of the canal to its influence as a factor in our commerce with South America. It is destined to have a much wider sphere of influence.

**Justifiable Homicide.**

If the story told by AUGUSTUS A. HAUKE of the circumstances under which he shot two men, wounding one of them mortally, Monday evening is correct, the complete justification of his act is contained in Section 205 of the Penal Code. HAUKE declares that he had reason to believe, from the actions of the young men whom he encountered, that they intended to commit an assault on a member of his family. The liberty of action granted to a man under such circumstances is wide. The Penal Code provides:

"Homicide is justifiable when committed either—

"1. In the lawful defense of the slayer, or of his or her husband, wife, parent, child, brother, sister, master or servant, or of any other person in his presence or company, when there is reasonable ground to apprehend a design on the part of the person slain to commit a felony, or to do some great personal injury to the slayer or to any such person, and there is imminent danger of such design being accomplished."

The fact that HAUKE is a policeman is immaterial and of no consequence. If the circumstances under which he fired at the men whom he wounded were such as to convince a reasonable man that his assailants intended to commit a felony, or to do "some great personal injury" to a person in his company, and might succeed in their design, HAUKE was justified in going to the utmost limit of his power to protect his wife, as any other man would have been.

The park in which this affair occurred is said to have been the scene of a number of assaults on women. The defense of an innocent game, and by accident ran into Mrs. HAUKE. A lonely park which has a bad name is a dangerous place in which to play, particularly after nightfall.

**A Very Striking Census Bulletin.**

The most scientific examination of the "race suicide" question yet made in the United States is that by Professor WALTER F. WILLCOX of Cornell University. It is published as a "Bulletin" of the Census Bureau.

The birth rate of this country is incalculable with any approximation to scientific accuracy from official statistics of births. These are notoriously defective in the States generally. In the city of New York, for example, while the statistics of deaths are among the most complete and accurate of any great community in the world, those of births are obviously untrustworthy. It is estimated that as many as a quarter of the births are not reported to the Health Department, chiefly from negligence, ignorance and carelessness. The astonishing results shown in the official statistics of births in New York last year we have already commented on. According to them the births among the Jews were a half more than those of any other race. If those statistics were to be trusted, the necessary inference would be that the Jewish element in the population is far larger than has been estimated. The more reasonable inference is that the record of births of the other races, more particularly the Germans and Irish, is grossly defective. The Italian statistics seem to correspond with the number of the race in New York.

Professor WILLCOX, therefore, makes no attempt to compute the birth rate of the United States from the statistics of births, but simply to determine the ratio of the number of children under five years to the number of women of child bearing age. This ratio steadily declined in the last century, so far as shown by available statistics. In 1900 there were only three-fourths as many living children under five years of age to each 1,000 potential mothers as in 1800, and since 1800 the decline has been continuous in each decade. At the beginning of the century children under ten years of age constituted one-third of the total population; at the end, less than one-fourth.

This suggested falling off in the birth rate, however, has not been peculiar to this country. Coincidentally there has been such a decrease in almost every country of western Europe. It is an incident of the increasing complexity of modern civilization and the social and economical consequences; and, in the opinion of Dr. JOHN SHAW BILLINGS, a distinguished authority in vital statistics, the continued operation of such causes will tend to lower the birth rate hereafter. Such a retardation in the growth of population, however, cannot be called an evil in itself.

In this country the loss by births is more than made up by the accession by

immigration. This brings up a striking fact pointed out by General WALKER, the Superintendent of the Census of 1870 and 1880, that "the decline in the rate of increase of the American population, and so the decline in the birth rate, began with the rapid influx of immigrants"; in other words, "as the foreigners began to come in large numbers the native population more and more withheld their own increase." His conclusion was that the great foreign immigration into this country "amounted not to a reinforcement of our population, but to a replacement of native by foreign stock." He had "not a doubt that if the foreigners had not come the native element would long have filled the places the foreigners usurped."

Professor WILLCOX's examination of the census statistics shows, pertinently, that the number of children under five years of age to 1,000 women of child bearing age in the North and West, where the immigrants settled almost exclusively, declined from five-sixths that of the South in 1850 to less than three-fourths in 1900, though the birth rate among the negroes had diminished.

General WALKER's remarkable conclusion recalls expressions made in the debate of the subject of naturalization in the first Congress, in 1790. For example, JAMES JACKSON of Georgia was "clearly of the opinion that rather than have the common class of vagrants, paupers and other outcasts of Europe, we had better be as we are and trust to the natural increase of our population for inhabitants." THEODORE SUNDOW of Massachusetts was likewise "doubtful of the policy of settling the vacant territory by immigration," believing that the natural increase of the American population would be better and sufficient.

"If any one had told me three weeks ago that this country would always train and rear a large number of its own sons, and that, rather than pay an extra two or three cents for foreign labor, it would be able to produce its own labor, I would not have believed it," said WILLIAM BROWN, of the Brooklyn Transportation Reform League.

Many of the discomforts and annoyances suffered by travelers on New York's various transportation systems are due entirely to the carelessness, obtuseness or shortsightedness of the public themselves. The most glaring example of this in the world cannot be found in any other country. It is the people who refuse to travel except under the most uncomfortable conditions.

**CATHOLIC PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS.**

**Various Testimony as to Their Excellence Compared With Public Schools.**

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: The "Catholic School" is sure that if the statistics of criminals gathered in the last three or four decades were gathered to demonstrate that the percentage who obtained their early training in Catholic schools is "infinitesimally small." These statistics are not in the public domain, but the conviction now in prison, but I question if the number and percentage would be as small as he assumes.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: I have read with great interest the article in your issue of August 29, regarding the Catholic schools, and while I have no desire to "butt in" on this parochial school controversy I am moved to express the heartfelt approval of the last paragraph of that article's letter.

With full recognition of the great value of our public school system I must confess disappointment, after many years experience as an officer and educator, that the Catholic schools are not doing as well as they should. It is the purpose eventually aimed at—a full general education.

Let our public school children be thoroughly grounded in the "three R's" and mathematics. Results will be attained for them than from the present system of questionable usefulness—the stuffing of their poor little noddies with the Lord's Prayer and the multiplication table.

Don't let us forget that the beginning of this great republic of ours was founded mainly on "common school" education, and do give the "kids" a chance to know where they are at what they are doing, and to get a good business proposition.

NEW YORK, Aug. 29. J. W. E.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: In my opinion Mr. Claret's article in the right in regarding the Roman Catholic parochial school a menace to the nation.

First of all, they are unnecessary. The public school system is too good for anything. In public education, Protestant or Hebrew, in public education the State recognizes no religion.

The Roman Catholic Church maintains that the public school is a menace to the nation, and that the youth of this country, consequently, are schools in every parish possible in order to educate the young of its faith. Of course, in a free country like this, the right to do as they please is a sacred right, and we have the right to express our opinion as to what we believe to be a menace to the nation. I believe that the building of these parochial schools is a direct slap at the schools supported by the State.

NEW YORK, Aug. 28. F. X. M.

**The Pay of Stenographers.**

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Please tell me in reply to my inquiry in to-day's SUN that if I expect \$20 a week as a steady ditto as a stenographer the sooner he gets out of the business the better. He may consider himself lucky if he starts at \$15. If he doesn't he doesn't belong in the stenographic business. He may get \$15. This applies to women as well as men.

NEW YORK, Aug. 28. X. L.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: If the remark of Mr. George Martin's friend that "no woman stenographer is worth more than \$15 a week" is born of his experience with this class of business women, let me suggest that he engage an intelligent and competent amanuensis at a salary of, say, \$25 or \$30 the week.

HARTFORD, Aug. 28. Miss G. L.

**The Manufacture of Ghee Called For.**

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Some days ago I read the writer to say that the great companies engaged in the manufacture of oleomargarine have ever placed on the market that most valuable preparation of butter so largely used in India and known as ghee.

It is a fact that the manufacture of oleomargarine is kept for an indefinite length of time without deterioration. Such a valuable article of food prepared to suit the American taste would no doubt be ready to sell if the good qualities were made known to the public.

NEW YORK, Aug. 28. D. B. K.

**Police Negligence Charged.**

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: I have read with interest the letters on the police. Will you allow me to give an example of their activity? Friday, the 26th, at 10 A. M., I reported at a station house a robbery from my flat, which is just two blocks distant.

The sergeant promised "to have a detective round in a short time."

It is a fact that on Monday, 28th, and Sheriff Cook has made his appearance as yet—several days hours. Feather Healed Mercury! What!

NEW YORK, Aug. 28. W. F. CHRISTIAN.

**The Penalty of Success.**

Don't let's have that pretty big bill! Doctor—Well, living costs more than it used to, you know.

**THE YELLOW PERIL.**

The Subject Discussed From the Point of View of an Intelligent Oriental.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Mr. L. Feuilleant's able exposition of the yellow peril and equally able elucidation of means to ward off the same, in your paper of yesterday, has been an interesting and puzzling to an Asiatic mind. If the Orientals remain indifferent to Western institutions, they are called reactionaries and a hindrance to the general advancement of mankind.

It will be difficult, to put it mildly, for your correspondent to prove the existence of a single well organized aggressive, religious movement throughout Asia which may be characterized with the spirit of "anti-European activity." The Orientals' attitude so far has been merely defensive, and they have been even in the absence of proper means, able to withstand the aggression of Christian missionary propaganda. There is, however, one religious movement, originated in Persia, that has reached Europe and is making a considerable progress in this country. It is the Baha'is, who believe in the existing religion to be true in their origin, to forget all past animosities and to love all men as the children of the Most High.

He blames the Powers for delegating men of science to teach the Japanese "to fashion the other which when they try to fall on line with modern progress, their action is deemed as tantamount to an impending danger to Europe and America."

It is not only possible in countries under direct European control to prohibit subject races from learning modern sciences. But the Japanese, being free from foreign tutelage, have been able to learn modern sciences, and not very well prevented by the Powers from learning modern sciences. Moreover, the Europeans looking upon the Japanese, as they do on others of the Oriental people, as merely an inferior Asiatic race, permitted them to make the results of modern discoveries and inventions.

The remedy suggested by Mr. L. Feuilleant for the prevention of the yellow peril is more dangerous than the peril itself. He says that "the union to prevent by every means Japan from becoming the educator of China; it must prevent at any cost China from becoming the provider of men for Japan. Japan must be confined in her sphere. This betrays a pessimistic and reactionary attitude."

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